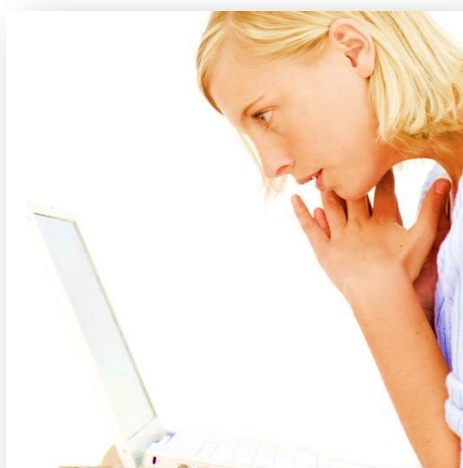




TIDBITS

Tips and Helpful Links

Try Something New!



Explore the Possibilities

provide the inspiration to try something innovative. The range of options seems endless – new models, new technologies, the supports being offered for implementing Arizona’s College and Career Ready Standards - all provide avenues for change.

Choosing one thing and doing it well is key. Find an idea that piques your interest – some change you feel would be beneficial for your students. Then, do the research. Still feel it’s worthwhile? Once you have a grasp of what’s involved in implementation, are you willing to make a commitment to working it through? How much support will you have at your school site or online to help you succeed? Can you enlist a colleague to work along with you?

Incorporating new elements into instruction helps us evolve as teachers. We want our students to be risk-takers, so our willingness to try something different or enhance a system we’ve already put into place shows we practice what we preach! And if things are a bit bumpy at first, it’s great to model for students how you work through difficulties and stay the course – a quality highly valued in our new standards. The following sections offer just a few topics for exploration along with links for additional details on each. You may find one or more appealing enough to investigate...

When fully immersed in the day-to-day business of educating students it can be difficult to find the time for reflection, research, and proper planning to introduce something new to your teaching repertoire. Now with the school year winding down and the promise of having several weeks where daily routines will change, it’s a great opportunity to think about what went well and perhaps consider some changes to implement at the opening of the 2014-15 school year.

For some teachers it’s obvious which parts of their programs need to be shored up; for others, browsing through articles and blog posts may

Increase Parent Engagement

It's important for parents to understand what Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards mean for their child with special needs. What type of parent trainings would be helpful? What type of communication network would be ideal for you to manage to maintain continuous parent contacts?

<http://www.dispatch.com/content/stories/local/2014/03/24/hilliard-worthington-schools-reach-out-to-parents-with-webinars.html>

Inclusion

Although it has been espoused for years, now is the ideal time to explore an inclusion model for students with disabilities. All students need instruction on grade level standards, and while special educators can make necessary adaptations to provide access, content experts in the general education classrooms will be creating lessons that meet the intent of the standards. Combining expertise will provide all students avenues of accessibility to quality instruction.

<http://www.middleweb.com/14202/support-growth-mindset-state-mind/>

<http://www.miningjournal.net/page/content.detail/id/596460/Peer-2-Peer-.html?nav=5006>

<http://ny.chalkbeat.org/2014/04/23/how-teaching-students-with-special-needs-makes-me-a-better-teacher-for-everyone/>

Self-Assessment

One of the best ways to improve your teaching skills is by regularly evaluating yourself as you teach. Select an area of focus, record your lesson, and then later review it on your own or with a colleague. The process will point out your strengths as well as areas where you can improve. Use a rubric to help you "rate" your skill levels, then target areas for improvement. Keep the recordings to document your growth!

http://www.thedailynewsonline.com/news/article_41963068-be19-11e3-b22f-001a4bcf887a.html

Take on a Leadership Role

Share your expertise! As a special educator, you've developed specialized skills and a valuable perspective on educating "individuals". In addition, you have knowledge of a wealth of resources that would be beneficial to the broader student body. Whether you're mentoring a new teacher or involved in grade level planning meetings, make it a practice to weigh in with novel ideas and approaches.

http://smartblogs.com/education/2014/04/16/what-maker-leaders-make/?utm_source=brief

http://smartblogs.com/education/2014/03/25/social-media-gives-professional-development-a-long-tail/?utm_source=brief

Explore New Technology

When it comes to the latest technology, students are often much better informed and adept at using it than many teachers. Time to get onboard and try incorporating a new aspect of technology into your daily lessons! Exciting technological innovations have the ability to engage students as well as increase accessibility in many cases.

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/web-tools-boost-student-engagement-nicolas-pino-james>

http://www.htnnews.com/article/20140405/MAN0101/304060180/Next-gen-education-Technology-changing-classroom-dramatically?nclink_check=1

<http://www.eschoolnews.com/2014/04/02/special-education-advances-540/3/>

<http://blogs.kqed.org/mindshift/2014/03/how-are-students-roles-changing-in-the-new-economy-of-information/>

http://www.insidebayarea.com/education/ci_25396070/cell-phones-proving-their-usefulness-classrooms

<http://durangoherald.com/article/20140317/NEWS01/140319575/-1/s>

http://www.silive.com/eastshore/index.ssf/2014/04/in_our_schools_these_special-n.html

Develop Students' Metacognitive Skills

Many of our students with disabilities lack the ability to plan, organize, reflect, and self-evaluate. Many are unable to sustain effort when tasks seem too difficult. Taking these into consideration as we plan lessons and explicitly teaching and modeling processes is important to help our students become more independent learners.

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/let-it-marinate-reflection-closing-joshua-block>

<http://www.npr.org/2014/03/17/290089998/does-teaching-kids-to-get-gritty-help-them-get-ahead>

<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/fueling-creativity-through-divergent-thinking-classroom-stacey-goodman>



With all the changes underway in instruction and assessment, how can ADE help make the transition smoother? Please call or email us with ideas!

Questions to Consider

- ▶ What PD do you still need?
- ▶ What PD do you think your colleagues/teachers still need?
- ▶ What resources can you leverage for PD?
- ▶ How can you make small changes in instruction to make big changes in student outcomes?
- ▶ What is one thing you can do differently next year?

Alternate Presentation, Response Options

Incorporating elements of universal design into lessons increases access for all students. Offering choice helps to engage students and gives them an opportunity to utilize areas of strength to show what they know.

<http://blogs.kqed.org/mindshift/2014/04/why-kids-should-be-allowed-to-act-out-scenes-in-class/>

<http://www.dailypilot.com/news/tn-dpt-me-0412-math-pathways-20140411,0,7397448.story>

http://www.silive.com/eastshore/index.ssf/2014/04/in_our_schools_these_special-n.html

Log on to our web page calendar to find out more and register for the Second Annual Teachers' Institute:

www.azed.gov

Keep students reading all summer! Check out this link to the digital library:

<http://www.azed.gov/special-education/2014/05/08/digital-library/>

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